

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION OF PORTO RICO
Office of the Commissioner
San Juan

October 23, 1918.
Circular Letter No. 40

To Supervisors of Schools.

Ladies and Gentlemen:-

ATTENDANCE - TEACHERS' ABSENCES

The earthquake of October 11 resulted in the closing of some schools. Inquiry has been made as to reporting teachers' absences due to the earthquake and as to the attendance of pupils during the days when schools have been closed.

Attendance

If for any reason school is not held upon a regular school day, such day can not be counted as a day of school; consequently, children can not be counted present and the day must not be counted as one of the "Days of School" as recorded upon page 15 of the Public School Register.

Teachers' Absences

Any teacher absent from school for any cause is absent from school. This applies to all teachers absent from their schools because of the earthquake. The only exception that should be made by supervisors is the case of teachers that have done relief work in the localities where they are employed as teachers. Where such teachers have reported for daily assignment in the work of the Red Cross or other relief organizations, such teachers may be counted as present; otherwise teachers not engaged in school work should be reported as absent.

Recommendation for pay should be made in strict conformity with Paragraph 123, The School Laws of Porto Rico. This rule, however, should be construed liberally. Pay should be recommended except in instances where teachers have done nothing to relieve the actual situation. If any teacher has made use of the closing of schools simply to enjoy a vacation, pay should not be recommended.

Supervisors and teachers have generally acquitted themselves well in a very trying time. Teachers in the stricken districts

Oct. 23/18

of the western part of the island have worked faithfully in all kinds of relief work; teachers in other parts of the island have taken a prominent part in calming the fears of the people. There are indeed some districts in which schools have not been closed for even one day. I can not commend too highly such faithful service.

All schools should be kept open and school work should continue in normal fashion. Wherever the Department of the Interior has reported that buildings are in good condition and can be used, mere rumors should not interfere with your duty in the matter of keeping the schools open.

Yours very truly,

(Signed) P. G. Miller
Commissioner of Education.

jcf